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INFO RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 0198
RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 0080
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [AF](#) [DA](#)
SUBJECT: DANES SUPPORT U.S. INFORMAL NATO MINISTERIAL GOALS
REF: STATE 4834

Classified By: Ambassador James Cain, reasons 1.4b,d

¶1. (C) Ambassador Cain highlighted for Danish MFA Permanent Secretary (deputy FM) Ulrik Federspiel the urgent need to

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seize the momentum in Afghanistan, to pre-empt and thwart an anticipated Taliban offensive in the spring. The United States plans to increase our forces and assistance as part of that effort, he said, and we are looking to Denmark and other allies to accelerate and step up their contributions. Ambassador Cain encouraged Federspiel, who will attend the January 26 ministerial, to consider SHAPE's recommendations to address specific needs and shortfalls, and to look at increasing development aid in response to the forthcoming coordinated list of high-priority, high-impact projects. The United States recognizes that Denmark has been a stalwart

ally in Afghanistan, Ambassador Cain noted, but the stakes for NATO could not be higher.

12. (C) Federspiel responded that Denmark shares "completely" our assessment of the situation in Afghanistan, and, without making any commitments, indicated that the Danish government is reviewing its assistance options and possible contributions of special forces. He also welcomed our emphasis on a comprehensive approach for improved civilian-military coordination, and agreed on the need for NATO-ISAF to have greater flexibility. Federspiel reported that Danish efforts to persuade the Germans to lift their caveats have not met with much success, and predicted that Chancellor Merkel will not be moved on this issue.

13. (C) That said, Federspiel noted that the Danes have been among those "doing the heavy lifting" in Afghanistan, operating in the difficult Helmand province, and provided us with a paper outlining Danish assistance to Afghanistan to date, which includes 117 million USD in reconstruction and democratization assistance for Afghanistan over five years, ending in 2009.

14. (C) Ambassador Cain took advantage of the meeting to press Federspiel to take a hard look at overall defense spending, with an eye toward adjusting the Danish defense budget to meet the NATO target of two percent of GDP. Federspiel indicated that the government's multi-year defense plan would not be negotiated among the parliamentary groupings until next year, and at this point it is too early to tell what public attitudes will be toward international commitments -- which increasingly serve as the primary mission for the Danish military.

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